



# Buzzwords ...

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MR N WALLINGFORD  
55 WATLING STREET  
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..... the newsletter for National Beekeepers' Association members

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"Know what was really good about the good old days? I wasn't good then and I wasn't old."



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I mentioned in last month's issue, your executive decided at the Industry Planning meeting in March to make a last ditch submission to the Minister of Agriculture on the issue of funding for our endemic bee disease control programme.

Two members of the executive, Keith Herron and Francis Trewby, did an excellent job in the preparation of this submission. The preparation cost of \$5750 was paid for by a grant from the Industry Trust Fund.

During our most recent executive meeting in Wellington an appointment was arranged with Mr. Denis Marshall, Associate Minister of Agriculture, where we presented the submission. Representing the NBA were Keith Herron,

Francis Trewby, Stuart Goodman, Ted Roberts and myself. Mr. Marshall was not able to give any encouragement at that meeting, but agreed to discuss the issue of government funding at the next Agricultural Caucus committee meeting on May 30. It is hoped that a final verdict will be reached at that time.

At the May meeting your executive also addressed two other matters with direct bearing on government. A policy statement on possum control prepared by our executive officer has been approved and will be sent to government departments. Possum control programmes using 1080 are on the increase and we want beekeepers' concerns taken into account.

A letter has also been sent to the Department of Conservation objecting to the proposed introduction of the heather beetle to control ling heather. We believe that this is another

insect introduction which could have a significant adverse affect on the beekeeping industry.

*Dudley Ward, NBA President*

## 1080 NAMES

We have published a number of articles on the 1080 possum poisoning programme in *Buzzwords* in the last two and a half years, so you are now all well aware of the reasons for the programme and the dangers the chemical can pose to bees.

What we have not done in the past is publish the names and phone numbers of the people coordinating the programmes in your area. Your executive is concerned that in some cases these individuals may not be aware of the presence of apiaries which could be affected. If you have any doubts in this regard you may wish to contact your possum control officer. The programmes are all run through the regional councils.

Regional Council	Name	Number
Auckland	D. Read	(088) 5284
Waikato	N. Hutchins	(074) 86373
	C. McKellar	(08133) 8130
Bay of Plenty	D. Moore	(0734) 59456
Manawatu/Wanganui	D. Harrison	(0652) 7189
Hawkes Bay	O. Harris	(068) 353164
Wellington	R. Clarey	(059) 82484
Canterbury	I. Lucas	(03) 653828
Otago	P. Dalgleish	(03) 4489172
Southland	B. Smith	(03) 2084715
West Coast	R. Lowe	(03) 7680466

These officers are in charge of Bovine Tb possum operations under the control of the Animal Health Board. A number of selected areas are being targeted in each region listed. Your local regional council can provide further details.

According to Peter Nelson, a consultant to the Animal Health Board, there are also likely to be non-Tb 1080 poisoning programmes in other regions (Northland, Taranaki, Gisborne) and by other government departments (Department of Conservation) not under the control of the board. To find out about these programmes, Mr. Nelson suggests that you check with the appropriate council or government office in your area.

## PUBLICATIONS AVAILABILITY

The Waikato branch has asked your executive to include a list of beekeeping technical and legal publications in *Buzzwords*. We make every effort to include full details of such publications at the time they are printed and also whenever any significant changes occur. Unfortunately, however, space constraints prevent us from publishing a complete list in every *Buzzwords* issue.

NBA head office has asked us to inform readers that a copy of the MAF report "Feeding Drugs to Honey Bees to Control Diseases", which the NBA commissioned, has now been sent to all branch secretaries and the association library. A

number of beekeepers have been wondering where they could obtain copies.

Several beekeepers have also contacted head office recently concerning the availability of copies of the Apiaries Act. All government legislation, including the Apiaries Act, can be obtained from your nearest Government Printing Office bookshop, or G.P. Print, Private Bag, Wellington 1. Cost for the Apiaries Act is \$3.70.

*NBA Executive*

## BRANCH NEWS

The **Auckland Branch** will hold its next branch meeting on July 11 at 7:30 at the St. Hildas Church Hall, 12 Young Road, Penrose. The purpose of the meeting will be to instruct delegates on the voting of conference remits. The branch would also like to give advance notice of their winter field day to be held on August 3 at the Auckland Airport Border Protection Service Fumigation Station. Details of the programme and starting time will be published in next month's *Buzzwords*.

Now that the **Hawkes Bay** branch apiary has been wintered down, the next step is to prepare equipment for the spring build up. The branch meeting, to be held June 11 at 7:30 pm at the Polytech workshop, will be a "hands on" opportunity to see how hive boxes and frames are assembled. The expertise of the commercial beekeepers will be blended with the enthusiasm of the hobbyists to give the beginners plenty of ideas and advice.



"One more outburst like this and I'll clear the apiary."

We forgot to mention the **Dunedin Beekeepers' Club** last month in our list of hobbyist clubs. The Dunedin club is very active and holds monthly meetings during the summer involving the club hives. Each year they have an end of season meeting called "A Taste of Honey" where members bring a sample pottle of the year's harvest. Members come up with quite a variety of honeys from the Dunedin area. The club recently gave a beekeeping demonstration to the Social Resource Centre. The day went so well they plan to have one again next year. Contact for the Dunedin Beekeepers' Club is Dorothy Lamsdale, 13 Durham St., Dunedin.

The **Southern North Island** branch will be holding their pre-Conference meeting to discuss remits on June 21 at the Rotary Clubrooms, Linton Street, Palmerston North at 10 am.



## EXPORT CONFORMITY CERTIFICATION SCHEME

This sounds like a nice piece of bureaucratic legalise but what it really means is a system that exporters put in place and use to assure MAF that conditions required by importing countries are being met. Once an exporter has such a system, documents it, and has it approved by MAF, export certificates can be issued more easily with only occasional checks (audits) on the system itself. The alternative is an expensive checking of the export product (end-point inspection), or in our case checking the production apiaries and usually all neighbouring apiaries within a 3-8 km range.

Export conformity schemes are now in use for most agricultural and horticultural commodities and may soon be a requirement for exporting to the EEC. Over the next year exporters of bees, honey or bee products will be invited to join similar schemes if they need export certification from MAF. It is hoped that a representative from MAF Quality Management will address conference on the issue and export certification alternatives will be a major topic of the NZ Queen Bee Producers Association annual general meeting at Blenheim, July 15.

*MAF Quality Management*

## BEEKEEPING CODE OF PRACTICE

Your executive is currently considering the desirability of adopting a beekeeping Code of Practice. Codes of Practice are in use in many industries throughout New Zealand. They set out standards of behaviour followed by industry members and often include grievance procedures for those who do not toe the line. Two organisations using Codes of Practice which come to mind are the Pork Producers Council and the Master Builders Association.

An important reason for contemplating such a code in beekeeping is the fact that some NBA members are reporting difficulties in dealing with local government. Some councils are charging licence fees of up to \$35 per hive (and no disease inspection, thank you) while in one town, local authority inspectors are rumoured to be using the public nuisance by-law to remove all beehives located within the municipal boundaries. A Code of Practice is seen as an effective counter to such problems, because councils tend to use these codes as the basis for local body legislation.

The question your executive is asking, however, is what should be included in such a code. One obvious topic is the siting of hives. A code should specify where hives should be located in urban areas, including distance from neighbours, footpaths, and public buildings like schools. But what about outside urban areas? Should the code include provisions similar to the Bay of Plenty branch's Code of Ethics which specifies that commercial apiaries should not be sited within 1 km of each other?

Another perennial matter of concern is honey house licensing. While specifications for honey houses are listed in the Food Hygiene Regulations, the premises are inspected by local authorities. We all have stories about the inconsistent approach taken by various local authority

inspectors, but the beekeepers have never really taken a positive approach to the matter in the form of their own industry-wide code.

And then there's the issue of the transport of hives. Transport regulations are quite explicit about securing loads, but what about hive straps and flying bees? In the U.S., trucks with bees aren't even allowed on some highways anymore because beekeepers failed to adequately confine their loads.



These and many more issues are examples of what could be included in a beekeeping Code of Practice. But the NBA executive needs your help on this one. They are asking for comments on the following: a) your feelings on the whole idea, either negative or positive, b) areas you believe should be included in such a code, c) examples of what you regard as unfair treatment under existing local government by-laws. With the changeover to regional councils now complete, your executive feels that now is the time to develop a Code of Practice so that it can be used to influence the setting of new local by-laws.

## EMPLOYMENT CONTRACTS ACT

This much debated piece of legislation became law on May 15. Despite all the furore surrounding its passage through Parliament the sun still seems to rise in the east and set in the west.

What does this act have to do with beekeepers? In most cases the answer is nothing, as most beekeepers are self-employed or work in partnerships. However, for those large businesses employing labour certain changes will occur.

The act provides for either individual contracts or collective contracts, as the parties prefer. Employees may, if they choose, be represented by a bargaining agent during negotiations or may sort out their own contract with their employer. Certain things such as holidays must be covered in all contracts while others such as personal grievance procedures **must be** specified only in collective contracts and **may be** specified in individual contracts.

If you are an employer or an employee then I would advise you to obtain a copy of the Act (\$8.50 from your nearest Government Bookshop) and study it carefully. There are also seminars being given on the subject by the Employers Association which may be worth attending.

*Ted Roberts, NBA Executive Officer*

## TED TRAVELS

Ted Roberts, Apicultural Consultant, Palmerston North, and the NBA Executive Officer, is off to his homeland (Wales, that is). He'll be out of the country from May 29 to July 3. Any urgent requests of a MAF variety should be addressed to Murray Reid, Hamilton, or Derek Bettesworth, Whangarei. NBA matters will be handled by head office, PO Box 4048, Wellington. *Iechyd da*, Ted. (That's "Cheers!" in Welsh).

## MIGHTY MIDGETS AND TINY TYRANTS

Conservation Week is fast approaching (July 28 - August 4) and this year's theme is "Mighty Midgets and Tiny Tyrants". The aim of the organisers is to encourage people, and especially the young, to explore the world of smaller living things. They believe it's necessary to change the "squelch" mentality so that people learn that "if it won't hurt you, don't hurt it."



Our industry has a particular problem in that regard, since it's hard to convince most people that bees won't hurt them. So Conservation New Zealand has approached the NBA seeking beekeepers' help.

Executive is asking branches to take Conservation Week on as a branch project and in particular for members to go along to a local school and give a presentation on bees and honey. An observation hive can work wonders at these presentations, and because newspapers will be looking for Conservation Week stories it might be a good way to generate positive publicity for our industry.

If you want further information on Conservation Week, contact Conservation New Zealand at PO Box 10-420, Wellington, phone (04) 710 726. Don't forget to ask them for a Murray Ball "Dog" poster!

## HIVE LEVIES OVERDUE

As of early May a total of 160 beekeepers still had not paid their hive levy. The problem is one of concern to executive, especially as it relates to requests for payment extensions. Under provisions of the Hive Levy Act, beekeepers must

submit applications for such an extension prior to March 31. Section 5 of the act does not allow executive to consider applications received after that date.

NBA Executive

## HEARD IT ON THE GRAPEVINE

A well-known beekeeper (who shall remain nameless) had a bit of a problem with his hot room recently. Clover honey was precious in his area this year, but he managed to scratch up enough to do an extraction run and in preparation put all the supers in the hot room to warm overnight.

Enter the villain, one of those points thermostats that always gum up and fail to turn off the heat. Our well-known beekeeper was lucky, though. Normally a stuck points thermostat tends to burn the honey house down. But in this case the heater just didn't have enough grunt. It only managed to melt all the honey and wax out of the boxes.

But the story doesn't end there. It seems the honey house is on a hill and the honey and wax proceeded to run under the hot room door, across the shed floor, out the honey house door, and down the hill towards his queen rearing yard. So our well-known beekeeper now has the best-fed mating nucs in New Zealand and a fairly slippery drive up the hill!

Moral of the story: make sure you have good insurance cover (our well-known beekeeper did) and replace those old thermostats with a solid-state remote thermostat (Honeywell or similar).

The beekeeper's grapevine is legendary, and we hope to make "Heard It On The Grapevine" a regular feature of *Buzzwords*. So the next time you hear a "good one", make sure you let us know. Names will be changed to protect the innocent (and the guilty!).

## BUZZWORDS IS ...

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